



NUMBERED MEMORANDUM 14-008

TO: Program Coordinators
Program/Site Nutritionist

FROM: Marjorie Chambers
Interim State WIC Director

DATE: December 24, 2013

SUBJECT: Abbott Changes to Some Similac Infant Formula Products

This memo is in follow up to the announcement at our December statewide meeting that changes were coming to some of Abbott's infant formula products. As you know, at the time we were not at liberty/were still confirming what changes were involved. We have since received further information. Below is a brief summary of what we know at this point:

Most of Abbott's standard, non-exempt infant formulas are changing to provide 19 kcal/oz of formula instead of the current 20 kcal/oz. Because of this, the products involved no longer meet WIC federal standards for the minimum of 20 kcal/oz at standard dilution and will no longer be approved for use in the WIC Program nationwide. These products include:

- *Similac Sensitive*
- *Similac Total Comfort*
- *Similac for Spit Up*
- *Similac Advance* and *Similac Isomil* in 8 oz RTF containers only (see below)

Products not changing include:

- all exempt infant formulas (*Pregestimil*, *Alimentum*, *Elecare*, etc)
- *Similac Advance* and *Similac Soy Isomil* in the following forms:
 - 32 RTF, 12.4 powder, and 13 oz conc liquid. (keeping the same solely for the purpose of honoring rebates and meeting kcal requirements for states that have contracts with Abbott)

The revised formulas with the 19 kcal/oz as listed above are expected to be at the retail level in February, and will be available to hospitals and institutions by late April/early May. As you know, the only product affected by these changes that is currently Connecticut WIC approved is the Similac for Spit-up, which requires a prescription. Therefore, local agencies will need to contact the health care provider as soon as possible (before February checks are issued) to determine what alternate product should be provided to the infant. Attached is a list

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of each agency's participants who are currently receiving checks for *Similac for Spit up* For your reference

As you know, *Similac for Spit up* is a lactose free product with a rice starch component indicated for GE reflux and lactose intolerance. Please note the following:

- While *Enfamil AR* is also indicted for reflux, it is not lactose free and therefore not automatically an equivalent replacement. If an infant is only on the product because of reflux, and not lactose intolerant, then *Enfamil AR* would be an appropriate equivalent substitute.
- **If the infant has reflux and requires a lactose free product, there is no equivalent formula that has both the rice starch component and is lactose free.** Each baby's situation and severity of the reflux is different and many things need to be considered, and we cannot make a broad based or general recommendation. The health care provider is responsible for determining an appropriate formula substitute, if medication is needed to control symptoms, and if rice cereal might be recommended. A potential example that the health care provider might chose may include providing a standard infant formula such as *Enfamil Soy Isomil*, which is lactose-free and/or add medication to treat the reflux and/or instruct the parent to add infant rice cereal to the formula. The typical amount is 1 or 2 teaspoons per oz of formula.

We will update you with further information as needed/appropriate. If you have any questions regarding formula availability please contact Kevin Krusz or Kim Boulette. For clinical issues contact Maureen Wojtczak or another nutrition unit staff person if she is not available.